



Deborah A. Gist
Commissioner

State of Rhode Island and Providence Plantations
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Shepard Building
255 Westminster Street
Providence, Rhode Island 02903-3400

Rhode Island Special Education Advisory Committee

The Rhode Island Special Education Advisory Committee is an active voice in advocating that all students receive superior educational services enabling each student to achieve optimum success throughout the school years and into the world of adulthood.

February 27, 2014

6:30 pm – 8:30 pm

RI Parent Information Network
1210 Pontiac Avenue Cranston, RI 02920

Meeting Minutes

Present: Edward Angilly, Sharon Bissonnette, Eileen Botelho, Ann Brockmann, Amy Canario, Lori DiPina, Susan Donovan, Cindy Duckworth, Gillian Elliot Pearis, Deborah Garneau, Rosemary Gomes, Patti Hien, Barbara Irons, Craig Levis, JoAnn Nannig, Robin Pacheco, Mary Pendergast, Brian Quigg, Maria Silvestri-Golotto, Sharon Ursini-Quimby, Marty Morris.

Absent: Kate Barnas*, Wilfred Beaudoin*, Cris Brodeur*, Jennifer Connolly*, Allyson Dupont, Joanne Eichinger*, Laura Laviano*, Cynthia Notarianni, Pamela O'Brien*, Douglas Pierson, Elizabeth Santana.

RIDE-OSCAS: David Sienko, Beth Pinto

** Indicates that prior notice was given regarding absence*

Call to Order, Welcome, Agenda Review: The meeting was called to order at 6:36 pm. Susan welcomed Marty Morris who is replacing Robert Wall (see last announcement).

Announcements:

- RIPIN partnership conference will be March 12th at the Crowne Plaza. Dr. Robert Brooks will be the guest speaker on the topic of "Building Resilience".
- *Is College in Your Future?* Conference will be March 8th. Sessions will include useful information on 504 plans and college. The highlight of the conference will be a panel of college students who will share their experiences.
- *Dare To Dream* conference is May 21st.
- The Transition Capacity Building Institute will be March 13-14.
- Marty Morris is the new representative to RISEAC from the Rhode Island Association for Private Special Education Schools (RIAPSES). She takes over for Robert Wall.

Telephone (401)222-4600 **Fax** (401)222-6178 **TTY** (800)745-5555 **Voice** (800)745-6575 **Website:** www.ride.ri.gov

The Board of Education does not discriminate on the basis of age, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity/expression, race, color, religion, national origin, or disability.

New Business:

Speaker: Jane Slade from OSCAS/RIDE and Cindy Van Avery, Regional Transition Coordinator from the Northern Rhode Island Collaborative presented on the topic of Transition. Highlights of the presentation are given below:

- A rubric used for evaluating transition activities, as noted on students IEPs, which corresponds to Indicator 13 on the State Performance Plan/Annual Performance Report (SPP/APR) was shared with the RISEAC. There are nine areas.
- Rhode Island currently has a 99.98% compliance rate.
- The number of districts who are in compliance has improved.
- The number of IEPs which have met all requirements as it relates to transition has also improved.
- Direct technical assistance to LEAs with non-compliant IEPs has positively affected compliance.
- Data from the Transition Rubric was used to improve quality of transition IEPs in this way:
 - 563 random IEPs from 24 districts at both high school and middle school level were reviewed
 - Areas of need were pinpointed for professional development statewide, e.g. statewide conferences and transitions institutes
 - Areas of need, as a result of the random sampling, were 1) PLOP (present levels of performance) and 2) transition services
- Various districts are doing very creative things, such as Central Falls where students list their post-school goals. RIDE has been able to connect districts with similar needs so ideas can be shared.
- Current trends that will be covered in the March Transition Capacity Building Institute:
 - More support to be given on transition assessments, with emphasis on embedding the assessments throughout the IEP
 - Use of assessments to determine PLOP
 - Use of assessments to drive post-secondary outcomes and IEP goals
 - Develop transition services as a coordinated set of activities to assist the student in achieving his/her post-school goals
 - Student-led IEPs
 - Encourage districts in use of data
- Available on www.ritap.org are documents and power point presentations from last year's institute and past years' speakers. It also includes many resources for use by teachers. There are live links to: various networks, College Panel, Middle School Panel, Employment Panel, Dare To Dream and others. There are also publications and trainings, such as RI Transition Timeline and a matrix of assessment tools as well as a lending library.

Approval of Minutes for January 16, 2014 – No changes were noted. A motion was made by Ann and seconded by Mary to approve the minutes. The vote was unanimous to approve.

Resignation – Sue indicated that Cynthia Notarianni sent a letter of resignation indicating she would be unable to continue as a member of RISEAC due to family issues which do not allow the time needed to participate as she would like. Sue expressed that RISEAC hopes she may return as a member at a later time when her time will allow it. Cynthia has served as a dedicated and contributing member and will be missed.

Old Business:

- A copy of the **Annual Report for RISEAC, 2012-13**, was distributed to all. The same had been given to Commissioner Gist and Representative Ryan when Sue and Mary met with them. In that meeting, part of their discussion focused on the Midwest bill regarding social-emotional learning. The Illinois state Dept. of Education approved standards for social-emotional learning. Commissioner Gist was also interested in how students with IEPs who had not passed NECAP are being given support.
- Sue also noted that at the next **March RISEAC meeting** neither she nor Mary nor David Sienko will be present as they will be attending a conference, so Patti Hein will serve as chair in Sue's absence.

Director's Report: David Sienko

RI Diploma System Update – Report was given by David to the Board of Education.

RIDE to Submit State Part B Grant Application

OSCAS will be submitting the IDEA Part B Grant application May 12, 2014. The ad announcing the public review and comment period will be in the Providence Journal this weekend. The draft application will be posted for review and comment to the RIDE web site by Monday March 3, 2014. RISEAC and the public are welcome to comment on the application.

RIDE to Submit Revised ESEA Waiver Application

RIDE will be submitting the revised ESEA Waiver Application shortly. I will forward the announcement to RISEAC for comment when the application is posted.

RIDE to send Team to Regional Meeting on SSIP (Indicator 17)

Beginning with the State Performance Plan (SPP) and Annual Performance Report (APR) submitted in February 2015, states will be required to submit Phase I of a State Systemic Improvement Plan (SSIP) that will describe how the state will focus on improved results for children with disabilities and their families. The NERRC will be hosting a regional meeting for state teams March 19-20 in Springfield, MA.

Rhode Island will be sending a team as recommended by NERRC to include, State Director of Special Education, State Advisory Panel member and a Parent Center representative as well as two staff from OSCAS responsible for Performance Management in the SPP/APR and the MTSS initiative.

The NERRC Regional SSIP Meeting will take states from "where they are" and provide them with protected state team planning time, as well as opportunities for cross-state sharing and consultation with national experts. Our objective is that by June 2014, state teams will be ready to write their SSIP for the FFY 13 submission.

The 2nd Rhode Island Statewide Transition Institute

The Rhode Island Department of Education in collaboration with Regional Transition Centers will be hosting the second Statewide Transition Institute at Roger Williams University, Feinstein College of Arts and Sciences, Bristol RI, March 13 & 14, 2014. This will be a working institute with district teams attending transition rich content sessions, team planning times and technical assistance from National Centers. Please feel free to contact Jane Slade jane.slade@ride.ri.gov with questions.

RIPIN Announces Partnerships Conference

Crowne Plaza in Warwick. Please click on the link below for a brochure to share with families and registration information. Attendance is \$15 and includes lunch. The Partnerships Conference is for families and professionals interested in understanding how to navigate the special needs and disability systems. <http://www.ripin.org/PartnershipsConference2014.html>

Dare to Dream Conference – May 21, 2014

The 6th Annual Dare to Dream (D2D) Conference will be held on Wednesday May 21st, 8:00 am-3:00 pm. D2D is Rhode Island's self-determination conference for middle and high school students with diverse learning and special health care needs. For more information please contact deb.golding@Health.ri.gov or call 401-222-5954.

Governor Chafee's budget supports education

The Governor has proposed an additional \$38 million to continue to accelerate Rhode Island's K-through-12 funding formula with full funding for Year 4 of the Funding Formula. In addition the Governor proposes to rectify funding inequities of the past and to provide additional support to those communities in greatest need. In addition, the Funding Formula Fiscal Year 2015 would include an additional \$1.1 million (\$4.4 million total) for transportation, an additional \$500,000 (\$1.5 million total) for high-cost special education, an additional \$500,000 (\$3.5 million total) for career-and-technical education, and an additional \$1 million (\$3 million total) for early-childhood education. Governor Chafee has also proposed \$5.9 million over five years to repair career-technical centers across the state.

LEAs encouraged to participate in Race to the Top – Early Learning Challenge initiatives

Rhode Island was awarded \$50 million over four years to improve the quality of early learning and to develop programs for the youngest children in our state. Educators in our public schools can support outcomes for young children by understanding the quality of their early-childhood classrooms and by developing and implementing best practices. The Race to the Top – Early Learning Challenge provides our schools with multiple opportunities to build quality in their preschool programs. Schools that would like more information or someone to come and speak at your LEA regarding the Race to the Top – Early Learning Challenge, please contact Melissa Emidy, at Melissa.emidy@ride.ri.gov or 222-8165.

Model school-safety plan developed for LEA use

Last year, the General Assembly passed legislation on school safety, which requires annual reviews and updates of school-safety plans and also requires us to develop a model school-safety plan for your use or adaptation. In partnership with Emergency Management Agency; the Department of Behavioral Healthcare, Developmental Disabilities, and Hospitals; the Department of Public Safety; the State Police; and the Division of the State Fire Marshal, a model plan has been developed. The model plan is posted on the [emergency-preparedness page](#) on the RIDE website.

RIDE releases October 2013 NECAP results

The complete report included cross-state comparisons, reports on disaggregation and achievement gaps, data on progress over time, the results of the writing assessment, and results at the school level.

Among the highlights:

- Rhode Island high-school students fared well compared with their peers in the region and improved their performance overall.
- Rhode Island students in grade 11 improved by 2 percentage points, to 81 percent proficiency, in reading, and by 2 percentage points in mathematics as well, to 36 percent proficiency.
- Rhode Island high-school scores are once again the highest among the NECAP in reading and have caught up with the other NECAP states in mathematics.
- Rhode Island results also remain strong in writing, with 60 percent of the tested students in elementary and middle school attaining proficiency – highest among the NECAP states.

- Rhode Island high-school students scored 66-percent proficient in writing, also highest among the NECAP states.
- At the local level, a number of schools and LEAs have made significant improvements in both mathematics and reading over the past five years:
- LEAs making significant progress in both mathematics and reading over the past five years are: Chariho Regional, Cumberland, Exeter-West Greenwich Regional, North Kingstown, North Providence, Providence, and The Learning Community (charter).
- The Lincoln School District made significant one-year gains in reading, improving by 4 percentage points.
- Schools making significant progress in both mathematics and reading over the past five years are: Burrillville High School, Chariho Middle School, Coventry High School, East Providence High School, Exeter-West Greenwich Regional Senior High School, Frank E. Thompson Middle School (Newport), North Kingstown Senior High School, North Providence High School, Vartan Gregorian Elementary School (Providence), Times 2 Academy Middle School (Providence charter), The Learning Community Elementary School, Pilgrim High School (Warwick), Warwick Veterans Memorial High School, and Westerly High School.
- Forest Avenue Elementary School, in Middletown, made significant one-year gains in both mathematics and reading. Burrillville High School, Narragansett High School, and Westerly High School made significant one-year gains in mathematics. Lyman B. Goff Junior High School and William E. Tolman Senior High School, both in Pawtucket, made significant one-year gains in reading.

The report is posted on the RIDE website, at:

<http://www.ride.ri.gov/InstructionAssessment/Assessment/NECAPAssessment/NECAPResults.aspx>

RIDE seeks public comment on proposed new tests, passing scores for initial educator certification

ETS, the testing company whose tests we use in Rhode Island as part of the educator-certification process, is adding new tests and phasing out older tests. There are currently six tests that ETS has regenerated that affect our current certification process. RIDE is seeking public comment from the education community and the general public on the certification tests and passing scores for initial educator certification in Rhode Island that RIDE has proposed and that the Board of Education has approved for public comment. To provide comments on the proposed certification tests and passing scores, please visit: <http://www.ride.ri.gov/Certification-Updates>. If you have any questions about these tests and passing scores, please feel free to contact Hilda Potrzeba, at hilda.potrzeba@ride.ri.gov or 222-8891.

U.S. Department of Education notes Career and Technical Education Month

This month, during [Career and Technical Education Month](#), the U.S. Department of Education announced that the name of the Office of Vocational and Adult Education has been changed to the [Office of Career, Technical, and Adult Education](#) (OCTAE), acknowledging that “career and technical education” is a more accurate term to describe what and how students are studying to be career-ready. The office has a rich history of being in the forefront of career, technical, and adult education, providing critical funding and technical resources, for example, to the career-pathways movement. OCTAE continues to be the office responsible for administering federal career-technical education (CTE) programs, as well as the partner adult-education programs. Two years ago, the office issued a [blueprint](#) calling for effective, high-quality CTE programs aligned with college- and career-ready standards. Students in such CTE programs graduate with industry certifications, licenses and postsecondary certificates, or degrees that prepare them for in-demand careers within high-growth sectors.

RIDE develops, posts videos on Common Core State Standards

RIDE has received a foundation grant to help advance communications regarding the Common Core. This grant has financed the team of Common Core Ambassadors, who have led a series of informational forums on the Common Core in many communities. The grant has also enabled RIDE to develop several informational [videos](#) on the Common Core, which are posted on the RIDE website.

Providence schools, The Learning Community, Inspiring Minds receive grants

The Providence Public Schools and Ready to Learn Providence on the receipt of a \$3-million investing in Innovation competitive grant from the U.S. Department of Education. The grant will support efforts to engage with families to teach “the life skills every child needs to succeed.” Congratulations as well to The Learning Community charter public school, which has received a \$75,000 grant from Blue Cross & Blue Shield of Rhode Island to “engage students and their families in a lifelong commitment to exercise and healthy living.”

Public Comment: None.

Adjournment: A motion was initiated by Ann and seconded by Joann to adjourn. The meeting adjourned at 8:30 pm.

Recording Secretary: Ann L. Brockmann

RISEAC website: www.riseac.org